

Resume Tips



When it comes to resumes, everyone has their opinion on what is best. Resume requirements, likes and dislikes, and industry specific needs will necessitate a flexible document that changes depending on the positions for which you are applying. Even with that flexibility, there are basics that you should adhere to for a solid resume foundation.

- **One page is generally sufficient.** Keep it short and succinct; however, give enough data to entice the reader. Those with more experience may need an additional page or try writing a Functional Resume. If your resume is over one page, have others look at it to make sure you are not repeating accomplishments and that your phrasing is powerful and concise. Avoid templates – start from scratch.
- **When hand delivering or mailing your resume, print on quality paper.** Resume paper is not the same as printer paper. Light colored, high quality, cotton, bond paper is the best. If you use white, purchase high-quality, bond paper.
- **When emailing your resume, capture the reader with the subject line.** Use your title or referral name if possible. For example, Subject: Full Name (CPA) referred by President Engstrom for Benefits Accounting Director, Position #00145. What format will it be accepted in? (.doc, .docx, .wpd, .pdf). Recruiters read emails fast, so use 2-3 brief paragraphs that fit in the email window as your cover letter (unless the employer specifically requests a separate cover letter). When uploading your resume to a company website (cut / paste into a window), save your resume in Rich Text to remove all formatting. If you're able to upload a Word document, name the document "Full Name, Position Title, Date or Job #".
- **Create a heading or letterhead** with your full name (increase the font on your name), address (optional; however, some employers prefer to mail responses), phone number (with area code), and *appropriate* email address (create a professional email with no nicknames or offensive words). Remove the hyperlink on email. Only use one phone number in your heading (the one that an employer will have the most luck contacting you). Be sure that your voicemail greeting and/or ringtone are not offensive. If you're proficient with social media sites, include a link to your professional profile. For example, facebook.com/tsmith. Keep in mind, that employers may search your name on the Internet, so be aware of what information comes up when you're searched. When posting your resume to a website, be careful with the amount of personal information you reveal to protect yourself from identity theft. Clipart and/or your picture on a resume are not recommended.

EXAMPLES:

Jesse James

Darby, Montana

(406)123-4567

JJames@gmail.com

WILLIAM T. KID

852 Sure Shot Road, Custer, Montana 59801

williamtkid@earthlink.net

406/987-6543

...

Samantha Williams

CERTIFIED PUBLIC ACCOUNTANT

...

cell: 208.123.4567

SamWilliams@aol.com

twitter.com/accountingrocks

LinkedIn/SamanthaWilliams

(THIS WAS CREATED USING A 1-ROW, 3-COLUMN TABLE. THE 3 SQUARE BULLETS ARE INSERTED SYMBOLS.)

- **Use the same heading or letterhead** for your cover letter and references (professional references should be listed on a separate page). Also, use the same paper, font and style.
- **Abbreviations and acronyms** are not understood by everyone, so use them sparingly. For example, spell out Road, and if you do not spell out Montana, the correct abbreviation is MT (not Mt).
- **Use a conservative, clean font.** Use sans serif fonts without feet, curls or glitz. Fonts that are common across multiple systems are Arial, Garamond, Times New Roman, Calibri, Verdana, Tahoma, Georgia and Trebuchet. Readability is critical – as a guide 10-12 point is recommended.
- **A summary of accomplishments or a professional profile** is a great way to summarize your skills and abilities. Objectives are old school. It's better to highlight what you can offer an employer, not what you want. Give yourself a title. For example, "Senior Sales Executive", "Experienced Automotive Mechanic". Recruiters' eyes go to the top center of the page first, so use a summary section with three to six bullet points or three to four lines to clarify your core competencies, skills and/or achievements. Tailor it to a target audience or specific job to make it more relevant, highlighting qualifications, experience, knowledge and transferable skills. Convey your message clearly and concisely.

EXAMPLE:

FULL NAME

E-mail
Phone

PROFESSIONAL ADMINISTRATIVE MANAGEMENT

Collaborative | Responsible | Honest | Versatile | Dedicated

Experienced in customer-focused, high-energy hospitality industry
offering solid customer service and administrative skills.

Extremely friendly and detail-oriented with capacity to multi-task and work under pressure.
Receive positive customer feedback on regular basis.

AREAS OF EXPERTISE

- | | | |
|-------------------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|
| ▪ Office Management | ▪ Social Media | ▪ Interviewing Techniques |
| ▪ Employee/Employer Relations | ▪ Technical Writing | ▪ Recruitment & Selection |
| ▪ Policy Enhancement | ▪ Supervising Teams | ▪ Staff Development |
| ▪ Relationship Building | ▪ Customer Service | ▪ Community Outreach |

- **Highlight work experience, big name companies and/or job titles.** Titles should stand out and be listed first unless the name of the organization is quite distinguished. List your title, the name of the organization, city, state and dates of employment (in that order) when describing work experience. Minimize a part-time or irrelative job. Maximize a part-time job that is relevant to the job for which you're applying by describing accomplishments, awards or outstanding performance recognized by colleagues. If applicable, use a testimonial or a quote from one of your reference letters to make an achievement or award stand out.
- **Use parallel format for bulleted items.** If one bulleted item begins with a verb, start the rest with a verb. Use past tense verbs for former positions and present tense verbs for current positions. Sell results using action verbs and keywords to set the tone and energy. Front load each bullet, then weight them in order of relevancy. Don't use "Duties were..." or "Responsible for..." – instead, answer the what, how, why or what was the result? Drop the "I" and "We" from bullets which will give resumes a more confident, professional tone.

- **BOLD, *italics* and CAPITALIZATION are ideal** to highlight words, phrases or to use titles to draw attention – just don’t overuse them. **Be careful using underlines* with descending letters like p, y, g and q as they descend through the underline; and therefore, cannot be read by ATS (Automated Tracking Systems). Stay away from using white font as it does not translate in ATS.
- **Use KEYWORDS, phrases of the profession and action verbs** to effectively describe your experience. Improve your hit ratio and ranking by using language of the industry and keywords matching the job description and required qualifications which indicate you have the education, skills, talent, experience and industry knowledge for the job. If you do not have a full job description, look up an industry specific job description on the Internet. This is VERY important if you apply online through one of many sophisticated Applicant Tracking Systems (ATS) used by large companies, including The University of Montana (they use *SilkRoad*).
- **Use numbers, percentages (%) and dollars (\$) when possible** to convey power, quantify accomplishments and illustrate how your work made a specific and measurable impact. Make sure your data is accurate.
- **Include computer hardware and/or software knowledge.** List software programs you have proficiency with and be specific. If you’re proficient with Microsoft Office, specify how often you used each program and for what. For example: *Used Microsoft Word on a daily basis to compose correspondence; Produced weekly Excel reports; Distributed E-mail correspondence via Outlook and managed shared calendar to schedule meetings.* Also, include specific programming languages, database applications, social media applications and the Internet.
- **Education should be listed as degree, major** (and minor, if applicable/relevant), school/college name (always capitalize “The” in The University of Montana, etc.), GPA (>3.5), city and state. The graduation year is optional. Do not state the number of years attended. It is not appropriate to state you will earn a graduate degree if you are not admitted to and in the program. However, if no degree was earned, and your study area is relevant to the position you are applying, use “Coursework Included:” or “Studied:” It is not appropriate to state you will hold a certification or license by a certain date. Capitalize the names of specific course titles. It is ok to capitalize subject names / study areas on your resume because they are considered marketing material; however, it is NOT proper in a cover letter where you are to show you understand and use Standard English. Capitalize academic subjects when they form part of a specific department, but do not capitalize “department” when it stands alone. Capitalize academic titles when added before a person’s name only.

EXAMPLE:

_____ **EDUCATION** _____

Certificate of Applied Science, Administrative Management Customer Relations Certificate
College of Technology, Missoula, MT

- Academic Honor Roll

**Be accurate in the display of degree earned or you’re earning. The School of Business offers a Bachelor of Science degree in Business Administration with subject majors, NOT a BS in Accounting, Finance, MIS, Marketing or International Business.*

- **Memberships, community involvement and volunteer work** should be included if the skills acquired relate directly to the work you are interested in. Involvement can demonstrate professional development as well as leadership skills. Only include additional training, hobbies or affiliations if they are relevant and would be beneficial when working in the position for which you are applying.

- **Never include personal information** such as age, sex, race, marital status, and religious or political affiliations, as employers cannot legally consider this information when making a hiring decision. Stick to professional information. The only exception is when applying at a religious or political organization and it would help your candidacy.
- **PROOF READ!** Always check your resume for typos before submitting it. If possible, have someone else proof read it also (Job Service, Career Services and/or friend). Wait a day and proof read it again.

Remember, your resume should be an accurate reflection of your accomplishments. Don't tell it – SELL IT! Your resume is your "brag sheet." It should highlight what you bring to work for an employer. By adhering to these resume basics you can present yourself in the best light and increase your chances of being looked at as a serious and qualified candidate.

REFERENCES

Create a separate document for references. Technically, recruiters should not ask for references until or after the interview. However, if the application instructions ask for references, provide them. Your heading or letterhead appears at the top and should match your resume. You may also include "Personal and Confidential" at the top of the page. Make sure your references know that prospective employers may be contacting them.

There are 3 types of references: Professional, Personal and Academic. Using **at least three professional and/or academic references** is recommended. Explain your relation to each reference so the recruiter knows if they are calling a past colleague, a friend or a teacher. Only include contact information that your reference has approved.

EXAMPLE:

PROFESSIONAL REFERENCES

Full Name and Title
 Supervisor for 10 years
 Company
 Full address
 Phone number (with area code)
 E-mail (if available and approved)

TRANSFERABLE SKILLS

Transferable skills are skills that are not used specifically for a single job, but are applicable to a wide variety of settings. Transferable skills may also come from other activities besides previous jobs such as internships, volunteer work, household management, or hobbies. When deciding what skills to put on a resume or to discuss in an interview, choose your strongest skills that apply to, or are similar to, those required in the job for which you are applying.

You should research the skills that are needed by the company that interests you, and then make a list of your transferable skills. These should include knowledge, education, skills or abilities that will help you succeed in your new career. Remember that one skill, such as working well with your hands, can be carried over into many occupations. Make sure that you integrate your transferable skills into all of your job search tools, including networking, cover letters, resumes, and interviews.

EXAMPLES OF TRANSFERABLE SKILLS

Communication: the skillful expression, transmission, and interpretation of knowledge and ideas.

- Speaking effectively
- Writing concisely
- Listening attentively
- Expressing ideas
- Facilitating group discussion
- Negotiating
- Interviewing
- Editing

Research and Planning: the search for specific knowledge and the ability to conceptualize future needs and solutions for meeting those needs.

- Creating ideas
- Identifying problems
- Imagining alternatives
- Identifying resources
- Gathering information
- Solving problems
- Setting goals
- Defining needs
- Analyzing
- Developing evaluation strategies

Human Relations: the use of interpersonal skills for resolving conflict, relating to and helping people.

- Developing rapport
- Listening
- Motivating
- Cooperative
- Delegating with respect
- Representing others
- Perceiving feelings, situations
- Assertiveness

Organization, Management and Leadership: the ability to supervise, direct and guide individuals and groups in the completion of tasks and fulfillment of goals.

- Evaluating
- Coordinating tasks
- Managing groups
- Delegating responsibility
- Training
- Hiring
- Firing
- Budgeting
- Decision making
- Managing conflict

Work Skills: the day-to-day skills that assist in promoting effective production and work satisfaction.

- Cooperating
- Being punctual
- Attention to detail
- Meeting goals
- Enlisting help
- Accepting responsibility
- Setting and meeting deadlines
- Organizing

Action Verbs for Resumes

• Accelerated	• Classified	• Devised	• Forecasted
• Accomplished	• Coached	• Diagnosed	• Formed
• Achieved	• Collaborated	• Directed	• Formulated
• Acted	• Collected	• Discovered	• Fostered
• Activated	• Combined	• Dispensed	• Found
• Adapted	• Communicated	• Displayed	• Fulfilled
• Addressed	• Compared	• Dissected	• Furnished
• Adjusted	• Compiled	• Distributed	• Gained
• Administered	• Completed	• Diverted	• Gathered
• Advanced	• Composed	• Documented	• Generated
• Advertised	• Computed	• Drafted	• Governed
• Advised	• Conceived	• Earned	• Grossed
• Advocated	• Conceptualized	• Edited	• Guided
• Aided	• Condensed	• Educated	• Handled
• Allocated	• Conducted	• Effected	• Headed
• Analyzed	• Conferred	• Eliminated	• Heightened
• Answered	• Conserved	• Emphasized	• Helped
• Applied	• Consolidated	• Employed	• Hired
• Appraised	• Constructed	• Encouraged	• Honed
• Approved	• Consulted	• Enforced	• Hosted
• Arbitrated	• Contacted	• Engineered	• Hypothesized
• Arranged	• Continued	• Enhanced	• Identified
• Ascertained	• Contributed	• Enlarged	• Illustrated
• Assembled	• Controlled	• Enlisted	• Imagined
• Assessed	• Converted	• Ensured	• Implemented
• Assigned	• Conveyed	• Entertained	• Improved
• Assisted	• Convinced	• Established	• Improvised
• Attained	• Coordinated	• Estimated	• Incorporated
• Augmented	• Corresponded	• Evaluated	• Increased
• Authorized	• Counseled	• Examined	• Indexed
• Awarded	• Created	• Executed	• Influenced
• Balanced	• Critiqued	• Expanded	• Informed
• Began	• Cultivated	• Expedited	• Initiated
• Boosted	• Customized	• Experimented	• Innovated
• Briefed	• Debugged	• Explained	• Inspected
• Budgeted	• Decided	• Explored	• Inspired
• Built	• Defined	• Expressed	• Installed
• Calculated	• Delegated	• Extended	• Instituted
• Captured	• Delivered	• Extracted	• Integrated
• Cataloged	• Demonstrated	• Fabricated	• Interacted
• Centralized	• Designated	• Facilitated	• Interpreted
• Chaired	• Designed	• Fashioned	• Interviewed
• Charted	• Detected	• Finalized	• Introduced
• Checked	• Determined	• Fixed	• Invented
• Clarified	• Developed	• Focused	• Inventoried

Investigated	Pioneered	Reported	Sustained
Involved	Placed	Represented	Synthesized
Issued	Planned	Researched	Systematized
Joined	Played	Reshaped	Targeted
Judged	Predicted	Resolved	Taught
Kept	Prepared	Responded	Terminated
Launched	Prescribed	Restored	Tested
Learned	Presented	Retrieved	Tightened
Lectured	Presided	Reviewed	Totaled
Led	Prevented	Revised	Tracked
Lifted	Printed	Revitalized	Traded
Listened	Prioritized	Routed	Trained
Located	Processed	Saved	Transcribed
Logged	Produced	Scheduled	Transformed
Maintained	Programmed	Screened	Transmitted
Managed	Projected	Searched	Translated
Manipulated	Promoted	Secured	Traveled
Marketed	Proofread	Selected	Tutored
Maximized	Proposed	Separated	Uncovered
Measured	Protected	Served	Undertook
Mediated	Proved	Shaped	Unified
Merged	Provided	Shared	United
Mobilized	Publicized	Simplified	Updated
Modified	Purchased	Simulated	Upgraded
Monitored	Qualified	Sketched	Used
Motivated	Questioned	Sold	Utilized
Navigated	Raised	Solved	Validated
Negotiated	Ran	Sorted	Verbalized
Netted	Rated	Spearheaded	Verified
Observed	Reached	Specialized	Vitalized
Obtained	Realized	Specified	Volunteered
Opened	Reasoned	Spoke	Weighed
Operated	Received	Sponsored	Widened
Ordered	Recommended	Staffed	Won
Orchestrated	Reconciled	Standardized	Worked
Organized	Recorded	Started	Wrote
Originated	Recruited	Streamlined	
Outlined	Reduced	Strengthened	
Overcame	Referred	Structured	
Overhauled	Regulated	Studied	
Oversaw	Rehabilitated	Suggested	
Participated	Related	Summarized	
Performed	Remodeled	Supervised	
Persuaded	Rendered	Supplied	
Photographed	Reorganized	Supported	
Pinpointed	Repaired	Surpassed	
Piloted	Replaced	Surveyed	

Adjectives and Adverbs for Resumes

- Accurate
- Adept
- Artful
- Astute
- Aware
- Calm
- Challenging
- Competent
- Concerned
- Creative
- Dedicated
- Dependable
- Diplomatic
- Discrete
- Diverse
- Driven
- Dynamic
- Easily
- Effectively
- Exceptional
- Expert
- Experienced
- Extensively
- Firm
- Foresight
- Greatly
- Highly
- High-level
- Honest
- Imaginative
- Improved
- Innovative
- Instrumental
- Leader
- Lifelong
- Mastery
- Natural
- Open-minded
- Original
- Outgoing
- Outstanding
- Perceptive
- Pioneering
- Quick
- Ready
- Reliable
- Repeatedly
- Respected
- Responsible
- Sensitive
- Significant
- Sophisticated
- Strongly
- Successful
- Tactful
- Talented
- Trained
- Uncommon
- Unique
- Vigorous